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SUBJECT: TENSIONS MOUNTING IN GOZ BEIDA

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: As UNHCR prepares for the High Commissioner's visit to IDP camps near Goz Beida, there are a number of reports of Janjaweed activity in the vicinity; the Chadian military and local self-defense militia appear to be reinforcing their elements for a possible defense. UNHCR expects that 9,000 new IDPs may be created as a result of expected violence. End Summary.

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IDPs, REFUGEE MOVEMENTS
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¶2. (SBU) In the middle of preparations for the visit of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to the refugee camps in the Goz Beida area, threats of Janjaweed attacks are causing population displacements and the Chadian military and local self-defense militia (Toroboro) appear to be reinforcing their elements for a possible defense. IDPs from the village of Habile have reportedly entered the Goz Amer camp and are living with the refugee populations out of security concerns. Violence is on the upswing. UNHCR reports that 10 refugees have gone missing in the past few days, and four refugees were reportedly killed in local conflicts (the reason for death is unclear). Poloff visited the hospital in Goz Beida, and encountered two individuals who claimed to be seriously injured by Janjaweed militias after refusing to hand over their cattle, and a CNAR local official who was shot in the hand by unknown assailants.

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JANJAWEEED SIGHTINGS, CHADIAN MILITARY FORTIFYING
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¶3. (SBU) While the Koukou refugee camp was calm on the afternoon of December 18, Poloff and UNHCR observed five Chadian national army (ANT) vehicles with heavily armed soldiers going from Goz Beida to Koukou. There were reports that between 500-1,000 armed individuals on camels (being identified as Janjaweed militia) are in the vicinity of Koukou. Janjaweed militia was also seen approximately 100 meters from the InterSOS clinic in the Goz Amer camp. ANT officials are asserting to the UN that the Janjaweed are supported by the Sudanese government in an attempt to destabilize the region and pave the way for "pan-arabization" of Chad and surrounding countries.

¶4. (SBU) With reports of Janjaweed movements coming closer to Goz Beida, UNHCR and NGO staff are bracing for a Janjaweed attack on the town, although the motives for such an attack are not clear. The village of Enedif, close by to Goz Beida, has been emptied out after reports of Janjaweed movement in the area. ANT elements, as well as local Toroboro militias, are reportedly fortifying the area to defend it from a potential Janjaweed attack. While there is no apparent presence from the JEM/NRF, there are unconfirmed reports the JEM/NRF are integrated into the ANT.

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UNHCR PLANS FOR GUTERRES VISIT, IDP SURGES
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¶5. (SBU) The UNHCR advance team intends to travel to Koukou camp December 19 prepare for UNHCR Guterres' visit. Should the camp be too insecure, UNHCR will take the High Commissioner to the Djabal camp. UNHCR expects that 9,000 new IDPs may be created as a result of expected violence.

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COMMENT
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¶6. (SBU) The Government of Chad (GOC) response to the threat of Janjaweed violence in the Goz Beida area represents a new wrinkle in the troubled border area. Previous Janjaweed predations have met with limited (if any) GOC defense. Wall